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Outline of a proposed plan for a wage investigation

[Albany?]

1913

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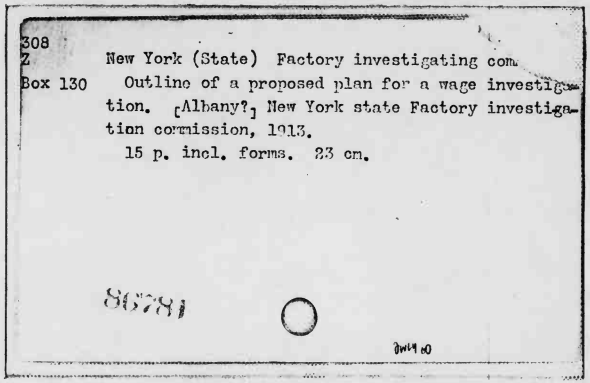
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Outline of a Proposed Plan

FOR A

Wage Investigation

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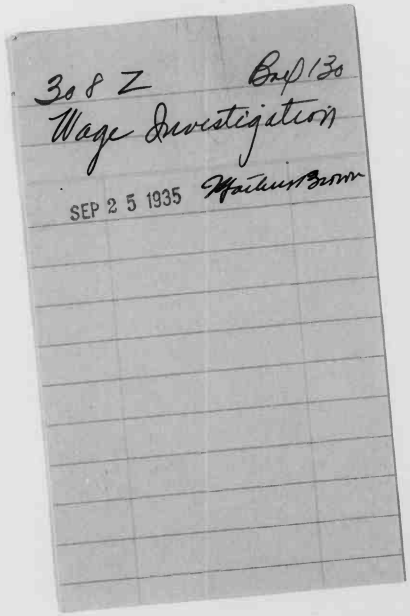
NEW YORK STATE
FACTORY INVESTIGATION COMMISSION
1913



Sept. 10, 1923 AE

OUTLINE OF PROPOSED PLAN
for a
WAGE INVESTIGATION

PURPOSE

The New York State Factory Investigating Commission, authorized in 1911 and continued in 1912, received an extension of industrial powers in March of the present year "to inquire into the wages of labor in all industries and employments and the conditions under which labor is carried on throughout the state and into the advisability of fixing minimum rates of wages or of other legislation relating to the wages or conditions of labor in general or in any industry." In order to carry out this extended function, the Commission received power to subpœna witnesses and to require the production of books and papers pertaining to the investigation.

The work of the Commission hitherto has been mainly concerned with the safety and health of factory workers. It now turns to the question of compensation and to the advisability of establishing laws regulating the same. The title "Minimum Wage Investigation" is perhaps unfortunate, as it seems to indicate the purpose of the Commission to establish such legislation. Such, however, we take it, is not necessarily the case; but the purpose is rather to consider the advisability of any such regulation.

SCOPE

The scope of the Commission's work falls into four main divisions:

First: A brief summary of recent investigations and findings along similar lines.

Second: What wages are actually paid in certain industries of the state?

Third: Are these wages adequate to maintain the employee effectively according to an appropriate standard of living?

Fourth: Are the industries able to add to the wage payment of their employees on the basis of the earnings from their labor?

This last point cannot be adequately determined with the means now at the disposal of the Commission.

The investigation thus falls into a discussion of the distribution of money wages and their adequacy.

INDUSTRIES SELECTED

In order to investigate the problem with the limited time and resources at the command of the Commission, certain industries have been selected in which the rate of pay is notoriously low. The following excerpt from Census Bulletin No. 93 shows the relative status of certain industrial occupations in this state. (See Table 1.)

The last Federal Census also shows that these industries are much below the general level as shown by the average annual wage. (See Table 2.)

It will be noted that the confectionery trade, paper box industry, silk, and men's linen are among the lowest paid lines in the state. However, these industries suggested are representative in that they employ a large number of hands and contribute a large proportion of the annual value of products as shown by Table 3.

It is true that they are not so important as the clothing, printing, foundry, tobacco and shoe industries, but in the latter cases the trades are fairly well organized and reasonably well paid. In the case of clothing, the trades are too extensive and too widely scattered to be investigated in so short a time. Moreover, in the case of this last group of industries, the employers and employees themselves are at present conducting investigations, and it would, therefore, be difficult for another to progress at the same time. Regarding the knit goods industry, it may be said that the State Department of Labor contemplates the possibility of investigating this.

Not only are the industries mentioned important but their distribution throughout the state is rather widespread, as shown by Table 4. At the same time, their concentration within a reasonably small number of large plants is shown in Table 5.

Finally, in selecting these industries, the proportion of women employed has been considered, inasmuch as the minimum wage investigations in other states have regarded this matter as of greatest importance, and because trades in which women are largely occupied are usually poorly organized and often underpaid. (See Table 6.)

FIELD OF INVESTIGATION

The Commission has also decided that it would be well to investigate the retail dry goods and department stores, because of the large number of young women therein employed. It has been suggested, however, that this part of the investigation, because of its great importance, be postponed until the smaller industries have been investigated, the force of inspectors trained and the schedules have been tried out. Otherwise, the first task of the Commission in studying the department stores would at once consume the greater part of its time and resources, and yield no basis for comparison.

With regard to the order of the investigation, it has been thought best to begin with an examination of conditions in New York City, both for reasons of convenience and economy, as well as because of the fact that in this way a fairly good idea of the conditions of the trade or industry throughout the state may be obtained. After this local survey in several lines has been completed, the other important centers in which the trades are represented will be visited.

The field of investigation will cover three sources of information:

First: The statement of the employer or of his responsible agent.

Second: The records of the firm, so far as they deal with wages and hours of labor.

Third: The statement of employees obtained in order to check up and correct the other two sources.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

As to the method of procedure, it is proposed to begin with a preliminary interview on the general facts of the trade or industry, such as the season's hours of work and general wage classification, the attitude toward employees, welfare work, etc. Then the investigators will proceed to use their tabular blanks to find from the payrolls and other records the individual weekly and annual earnings, following them through the entire year if possible or discover them for typical periods, where this is not possible.

While this material is being taken from pay rolls it is proposed to secure from a large number of employees individual cards which will identify them and to follow these employees by personal interview in order to determine their trade history and general standing in the occupation. The record cards appended hereto will indicate the details of such investigation.

While it would be desirable to investigate the intimate personal history and standard of living of employees, it is practically impossible to do such work adequately within the time assigned, unless a great amount of efficient co-operation can be secured from local welfare agencies, trade associations, etc.

Such material as has been obtained by interview and transcription, will then be tabulated and analyzed, and this systematic presentation will be supplemented by hearings, at which explanation and interpretation of the data will be brought out.

This material, it is hoped, will in the first place give a considerable body of facts upon which the Commission may base its judgment as to the wisdom of promoting any wage legislation. It may also indicate directions in which further investigation or immediate legislative action is desirable.

It is the hope of the investigating staff that this rough outline and schedule material will be freely criticised by persons interested in the work. Any questions or suggestions regarding the same will be gladly answered. We particularly desire to have the ground adequately covered so far as the time will permit, and at the same time to secure such simplification as will make possible a prompt conclusion for the task. We shall particularly welcome early appointments to discuss these matters personally.

TABLE NO. 1—LOW WEEKLY WAGE

Census Bulletin No. 93, 1905, Low-Paid Industries of New York State

Industry	Establishments	No. of Returns	Average Weekly Wage
Canning	257	7,350	$6.35
*Confectionery	104	3,877	7.12
*Shirts	83	3,938	7.29
*Paper Boxes	119	5,264	7.32
*Silk	43	4,884	7.68
Knit Goods	87	11,129	7.70
*Collars	7	6,498	8.04
Millinery and Lace	195	6,166	8.47
Tobacco	1,709	18,369	8.96
Bookbinding	141	4,245	9.08
Boots	71	7,064	9.35
Lumber	463	4,836	9.59
Men's Clothes	657	16,162	9.83
Women's Clothes	551	21,555	10.31
All Industries	19,030	430,475	10.40

TABLE NO. 2—LOW ANNUAL AVERAGE

Federal Census of Manufactures, 1909, of New York State

Average Annual Wages

(Total Annual Wages Divided by Annual Average of Wage Earners)

Industry	Average Wage (Annual)	Industry	Average Wage (Annual)
All Industries	$555	*Confectionery	$351
*Paper Boxes	413	Flowers and Feathers	407
Canning	362	*Furnishings	428
Carpets	565	*Silk	416
Men's Clothes	525	Tobacco	458
Women's Clothes	557		

TABLE NO. 3—RELATIVE IMPORTANCE

Federal Census of Manufactures, 1909, of New York State
44,935 Factories Employing 1,300,981 Wage Earners

Industry	Per Cent. of Wage Earners	Per Cent. of Total Value of Products
Men's Clothes	9.8	8.1
Women's Clothes	9.1	7.9
Printing	6.3	6.4
Foundry	6.4	4.6
Knit Goods	3.6	2.
Tobacco	3.	2.3
Shoes	2.2	1.4
*Furnishing Goods	1.8	1.3
*Silk	1.3	.8
Carpets	1.2	.8
*Paper Boxes	1.1	.4
*Confectionery	.9	.8
Canning	.7	.6

TABLE NO. 4—DISTRIBUTION

Number of Employees in Factories
N. Y. Department of Labor, Factory Inspector's Report, 1911

Place	Confectionery	Paper Boxes	Silk	Men's Linen	Total
New York	9,363	9,260	5,181	8,793	32,597
Buffalo	722	2,442	910	312	4.386
Rochester	645	864	....	434	1,943
Troy	....	309	....	14,609	14,918
Syracuse	319	211	....	50	580
Glens Falls	....	....	....	1,799	1,799
Albany	....	....	....	1,280	1,280
Hornell	....	....	1,244	....	1,244
Amsterdam	....	....	733	....	733
Utica	....	102(2)	....	....	102
Yonkers	....	....	66(1)	....	66
Schenectady	....	43(2)	....	....	43
Total	11,049	13,231	8,134	27,277	59,691

TABLE NO. 5—CONCENTRATION AND NUMBER OF WOMEN

N. Y. Department of Labor, Factory Inspector's Report, 1911

General Industry	Special Branches	No. of Shops	No. of Women in Shops
CLOTHING	Dressmaking	4,602	52,630
	Tailoring	5,265	25,004
	*Shirts and Collars	356	25,004
	Laundries	2,652	10,734
TEXTILES	Hosiery and Knit Goods	330	21,069
	*Silk	141	7,794
	Carpets	41	5,777
FOOD	Cigars	1,205	11,114
	Canning	199	5,329
	*Confectionery	783	5,172
PAPER	*Boxes	366	8,585
	Printing	2,313	7,170
	Bookbinding	306	4,147
LEATHER AND RUBBER	Shoes	268	7,522
	Gloves	130	3,377
	Mattresses and Pillows	298	2,090
TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES		44,672	322,131

TABLE NO. 6—PER CENT. OF WOMEN

Federal Census of Manufactures, 1909, of New York State

Industry	No. of Establishments	No. of Wage Earners.	Per Cent. of Women
*Paper Boxes	315	11,538	62.9
Canning	790	7,075	55.1
Carpets	16	11,898	44.3
Men's Clothes	2,983	91,363	41.1
Women's Clothes	3,083	98,104	57.3
*Confectionery	249	8,570	58.
*Men's Furnishings	375	18,186	77.2
Knit Goods	360	35,950	63.6
*Silk	170	12,903	62.4
Tobacco	3,371	30,019	50.6

The Employers' Policy Schedule is intended to suggest the principal subjects about which authoritative, though not necessarily statistical, information will be obtained from the employers themselves. For the actual guidance of the agents selected to obtain these interviews, these questions have been further amplified and subdivided.

Card 1 will be distributed in the establishments, to be filled by all employees. The questions have purposely been reduced to the least number sufficient to serve as an aid in the selection of individuals for intensive study.

Card 2 will be obtained for every employee in the establishments scheduled for one payroll period and will serve as an instantaneous photograph of the personnel, occupations, wages, hours, etc., in the industry.

Card 3 gives by occupations the information desired regarding the actual methods of remuneration in vogue.

Card 4 gives in detail the hours of work for different occupations for the various seasons. This will give an opportunity to obtain exact information regarding overtime, rest periods, etc., which have heretofore proven difficult of determination.

Card 5 gives in detail for every employee days and hours worked and earnings for each payroll period throughout the calendar year. For the purposes of basic study, annual earnings are of prime importance, but of scarcely less importance is the consideration of continuity of employment. Card 5, therefore, will be filled not merely for those employees who have worked steadily for a year but also, where the records permit, for all employees working less than a full year regardless of duration of employment. In this way we shall obtain the extent of changing personnel.

Card 6 gives a summary of the number employed and wages by payroll periods. It will give a basis for comparison of establishments as well as of seasonal and other variations.

EMPLOYERS' POLICY SCHEDULE

1. Kinds of help required (Main Occupations).
2. How are employees secured?
3. Is signed application required?
4. Are references or recommendations required?
5. Who hires employees?
6. Who hears complaints?
7. Who discharges employees?
8. Is working force stable or shifting?
9. Qualification of employees—physical, educational, experience.
10. Are employees versatile or specialized?
11. Training and promotion.
12. Preferences in employment, e.g., sex, age, nationality, religious or trade affiliation, women living at home.
13. Tendencies in personnel: Displacement of men by women, machinery, etc.
14. Overtime—how frequent, how paid.
15. Regular attendance required? What is done in case of lateness, illness, etc.?
16. When is the busy season? Dull season? Plant closed? Reasons for uneven operation.
17. During what legal holidays or other times is the establishment closed? Are employees paid for these periods?
18. What vacations are given—with pay? without pay?
19. How are time and piece rates fixed?
20. Is exact record kept of individual production? Of actual working time?
21. Social and beneficiary organization of employees.
22. Welfare work features—lunch rooms, rest rooms, etc.
23. Provision for veteran and injured employees.
24. Miscellaneous information and suggestions.

ESTABLISHMENT	EMPLOYEE'S NO.	INDIVIDUAL CARD	N.Y.S.F.I.C.–FORM 1

ARE YOU A MAN OR WOMAN?

NAME

ARE YOU SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED?

ADDRESS

AGE____ YEARS. COUNTRY OF BIRTH____

WHAT WORK DO YOU DO IN THIS FACTORY?____

HOW LONG SINCE YOU BEGAN TO WORK FOR WAGES?____ YEARS

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN THIS LINE OF WORK?____ YEARS

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING FOR THIS FIRM?____ YEARS.

DO YOU BOARD OR LIVE AT HOME?____

ESTABLISHMENT	EMPLOYEE'S No.	INDIVIDUAL EARNINGS	N.Y.S.F.I.C.–Form 2

NAME

ADDRESS

OCCUPATION

M16+	M16–	F16+	F16–	M	F

PAYROLL PERIOD____ DAYS

____ TO ____ 191

RATE OF PAY	PIECE	HOUR	DAY	WEEK	½ MONTH	MONTH	
		$0.	$.	$.	$.	$.	

DAYS WORKED	REGULAR WORKING HOURS	ACTUAL WORKING HOURS	OVERTIME HOURS	UNDERTIME HOURS	EARNINGS THIS PERIOD	EARNINGS COMPUTED ON REGULAR TIME	
					$.	$.	

ADDITIONS TO REGULAR RATE OR EARNINGS	
DEDUCTIONS FROM REGULAR RATE OR EARNINGS	

ESTABLISHMENT

WAGE CLASSIFICATION

N.Y.S.F.I.C.—FORM 3.

AGENT

OCCUPATION	HAND OR MACHINE WORK?	EMPLOYEES M 16+	EMPLOYEES M 16−	EMPLOYEES F 16+	EMPLOYEES F 16−	RATE OF PAY PIECE	RATE OF PAY OTHER	BASIS OF PAY OF PIECE WORKERS EXPECTED WEEKLY EARNINGS	BASIS OF PAY OF PIECE WORKERS TYPICAL PIECE RATES	MINIMUM BEGINNER	MINIMUM EXPERIENCED	MAXIMUM	ADDITIONS	DEDUCTIONS

ADDITIONS: 1. PREMIUMS 2. BONUS 3. PRIZES 4. COMMISSION 5. PROFIT-SHARING 6. DISCOUNT ON PURCHASES 7. OVERTIME 8. OTHER ADDITIONS.

DEDUCTIONS: 1. LATENESS 2. ABSENCE 3. SPOILED MATERIAL 4. OTHER DEDUCTIONS

12

ESTABLISHMENT

HOURS OF WORK _____ SEASON

N.Y.S.F.I.C.—FORM 4.

AGENT

OCCUPATIONS (OR DEPARTMENTS)	HOURS PER WEEK M 16+	M 16−	F 16+	F 16−	REGULAR FULL DAY: ____ DAYS BEGIN	STOP	GROSS HOURS	LUNCH MIN.	OTHER PAUSES	NET HOURS	SHORT DAY: ____ DAYS BEGIN	STOP	GROSS HOURS	LUNCH MIN.	OTHER PAUSES	NET HOURS	LONG DAY: ____ DAYS BEGIN	STOP	GROSS HOURS	LUNCH MIN.	OTHER PAUSES	NET HOURS

Establishment	Employee's no	Individual Annual Earnings	N.Y.S.F.I.C.-Form 5. Agent

Address | M16+ | M16- | F16+ | F16-

Name

Occupation

Payroll Periods ——Days Each, commencing ——— 191— | Weeks worked | Earnings | Av. per week worked $ | Computed Earnings 52 weeks $ | Computed 1/52 of Total Actual Earnings $

Pay. Roll	Days worked	Hours worked	Rate of Pay P	Rate of Pay Other	Net Earnings $	Net Earnings ¢	Additions	Deductions	Pay. Roll	Days worked	Hours worked	Rate of Pay P	Rate of Pay Other	Net Earnings $	Net Earnings ¢	Additions	Deductions
1									14								
2									15								
3									16								
4									17								
5									18								
6									19								
7									20								
8									21								
9									22								
10									23								
11									24								
12									25								
13									26								

Establishment | Wages and Number of Employees. | N.Y.S.F.I.C.-Form 6.

Payroll Periods —— Days Each, commencing ——— 191—

Pay-Roll	Number of Employees	Average number of Employees Total Wages $	Average number of Employees Average Wages ¢	Average Wage Payments per week $	Pay-Roll	Number of Employees	Absent Total Wages $	Absent Average Wages ¢	Av. Individual per wk.
1					27				
2					28				
3					29				
4					30				
5					31				
6					32				
7					33				
8					34				
9					35				
10					36				
11					37				
12					38				
13					39				
14					40				
15					41				
16					42				
17					43				
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19					45				
20					46				
21					47				
22					48				
23					49				
24					50				
25					51				
26					52				

Form 6—

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TITLE